

ISRAEL



Israel Commitment to Israel's security and well-being has been a cornerstone of U.S. policy in the Middle East since Israel's creation in 1948. Continuing U.S. security assistance acknowledges U.S. ties and signals U.S. commitment to Israel. The broad issues of Arab-Israeli peace continue to be a major focus of the U.S.-Israeli relationship. U.S. efforts to reach a Middle East peace settlement based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 have been based on the premise that as Israel takes risks calculated to promote peace, the United States will help minimize those risks.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

In addition to seeking an end to hostilities with Arab forces, against which it has fought five wars since 1948, Israel has given high priority to gaining wide acceptance as a sovereign state with an important international role.

Before 1967, Israel had established diplomatic relations with a majority of the world's nations, except for the Arab states and most other Muslim countries. UN Security Council resolutions provided the basis for cease-fire and disengagement agreements concerning the Sinai and the Golan Heights between Israel, Egypt, and Syria and for promoting the Camp David accords and the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty. The Soviet Union and the communist states of Eastern Europe (except Romania) broke diplomatic relations with Israel during the 1967 war, but those relations were restored by 1991.

The landmark October 1991 Madrid conference recognized the importance of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 in resolving regional disputes, and brought together for the first time Israel, the Palestinians, and the neighboring Arab countries, launching a series of direct bilateral and multilateral negotiations. These talks were designed to finally resolve outstanding security, border, and other issues between the parties while providing a basis for mutual cooperation on issues of general concern, including the status of refugees, arms control and regional security, water and environmental concerns, and economic development.

Today, Israel has diplomatic relations with 161 states. Following the signing of the Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles on September 13, 1993, Israel established or renewed diplomatic relations with 36 countries. Israel has full diplomatic relations with Egypt, Jordan, and Mauritania. In addition, on October 1, 1994, the Gulf States publicly announced their support for a review of the Arab boycott, in effect abolishing the secondary and tertiary boycotts against Israel.

Israel has diplomatic relations with nine non-Arab Muslim states and with 32 of the 43 Sub-Saharan states that are not members of the Arab League. Israel established relations with China and India in 1992 and with the Holy See in 1993.

U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONS

Commitment to Israel's security and well being has been a cornerstone of U.S. policy in the Middle East since Israel's founding in 1948, in which the United States played a key supporting role. Israel and the United States are bound closely by historic and cultural ties as well as by mutual interests. Continuing

U.S. economic and security assistance to Israel acknowledges these ties and signals U.S. commitment. The broad issues of Arab-Israeli peace have been a major focus in the U.S.-Israeli relationship. U.S. efforts to reach a Middle East peace settlement are based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and have been based on the premise that as Israel takes calculated risks for peace the United States will help minimize those risks.

On a bilateral level, relations between the United States and Israel are continually strengthening in every field. In addition to the Joint Political-Military Group described above, there are: bilateral science and technology efforts (including the Binational Science Foundation and the Binational Agricultural Research and Development Foundation); the U.S.-Israeli Education Foundation, which sponsors educational and cultural programs; the Joint Economic Development Group, which maintains a high-level dialogue on economic issues; the Joint Counterterrorism Group, designed to enhance cooperation in fighting terrorism; and a high-level Strategic Dialogue that meets biannually.

Peace and Security: Israel is a critical player in U.S. regional efforts to expand security and stability. Helping Israel maintain its qualitative military advantage enhances security by preventing regional conflict and builds the confidence necessary for Israel to take calculated risks for peace. The annual military assistance that Israel receives constitutes an important part of U.S. support for these objectives. Israel uses this assistance both to procure U.S.-origin defense articles, ranging from ammunition to advanced weapons systems and training, and to develop and support its own defense industry. A cornerstone of our Israel assistance package is guaranteeing Israel's qualitative military edge (QME). The increased funding for 2010 helps to safeguard the QME and fulfills U.S. commitments under the second year of the 10-year \$30 billion security arrangement with the Government of Israel.